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tion. I believe the time has come to protect American workmen against the competition of foreign pauper labor.

### GIRLS' BOARDING HOMES.

BY ROBERT STEIN.

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The main feature of the paper was a list of 120 of these institutions in the United States and Canada, giving name, address, weekly charge, degree of self-support, and capacity. Printed copies of the list were distributed.

The weekly charge in the great majority of cases is \$3.50, for room, board and washing, a sum which in the home secures comfort, while in a private boarding house it would mean penury. Some homes are self-supporting with a charge of \$2.50. The highest charge is \$6.00. The homes were primarily designed, in most cases, to shelter the unemployed destitute. Once established, the home, by the advantages it affords, naturally becomes a rallying point also for those in employment, especially if they receive small wages. It is found that both purposes are best served when the institution is of such dimension that the number of unemployed and therefore non-paying inmates, is an inconsiderable fraction of the total. Thus the home in its full development is a boarding house where workingwomen receive room and board practically at cost, with the assurance that they will continue to receive them on credit in case they should be temporarily out of employment. Starting as shelters for the unemployed, the older

homes in most cases were originally charities; but by giving prominence to the boarding house feature, all the more important ones have long outgrown the charity stage, being now self-supporting. Some could even show a surplus, did they not promptly reduce their charges, or enlarge their quarters, or increase their conveniences, whenever a surplus is threatened. When a considerable number of girls are once assembled, other advantages fall to their share. They can spend part of their free time in completing their education. Nearly all the homes afford instruction in some branch of education, such as sewing, cooking, housework and child-nursing, reading, writing and arithmetic, stenography and type-writing, drawing, singing, voice culture and elocution. The larger ones have gymnasiums. One is known to have a natatory. Instruction in all these branches is either free or given at a nominal charge. A further advantage consists in the social pleasures arising, first, from the mere presence of a large number of congenial and safe companions, and second, from amusements expressly devised, each inmate contributing, not money, but talent and industry to the entertainment of the others. Thus the one awful danger threatening destitute girls in large towns is dispelled, and their whole lives are lifted to a higher plane, and all by the power of one magic word: coöperation.

Complaints are heard occasionally that some managers place unnecessary restrictions on amusements. A letter was read, condemning in strong terms the alleged attempts on individual liberty practiced in some of the homes. While not denying the statements of the letter, the lecturer endeavored to extenuate them. Even should these statements be true

in the majority of cases, they would only prove the urgent need of these institutions, since they have in a short time become so eminently successful, despite their alleged shortcomings. The paper closed with a plea for that which these institutions most need: publicity.